

NOTE ON *NEOANTHIAS GUENTHERI*. Casteln.

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On the 13th of last month we received at the Museum a fine specimen of this fish, which had been caught at the Heads during the previous night; it measured $12\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and proved to be a male with the milt well-developed, and being perfectly fresh when it came into my hands, I had the best possible opportunity of describing it and of noting down its beautiful coloration.

A slightly larger example of Günther's *Anthias longimanus* was also captured at the same time and place, and was sent up to the Museum along with the *Neoanthias*; the similarity of physiognomy between the two fishes is so striking that I made a careful description of this specimen also, more especially when I found that it was a female with well developed ova.

The result of my examination is that I fail to find any appreciable structural difference between the two forms, and as difference in color alone cannot be relied on as specific in this vertebrate class, I am of opinion that the fishes described by Günther, and Castelnau respectively are identical in species, but different in sex.

Dr. Günther (Cat., Vol. I., p. 88), hints at the advisability of separating his *A. longimanus*, and certain other forms, from the typical Anthiads, and in this suggestion I am disposed to agree, nor have we far to look for a generic title suitable to these forms. If we turn to the Fauna Japonica, p. 64, pl. 30, we will find a fish described and figured by Schlegel under the generic name of *Caprodon*, which is easily recognisable as identical with Castelnau's *Neoanthias*; and since we know from the letter-press that Schlegel's description was taken from a mounted specimen which, as remarked by Günther—p. 94—is evidently imperfect, having but five

branchiostegals and no palatine teeth, it is probable also that the caudal fin, the shape of which in his figure is unique in connection with the genus *Anthias*, was frayed or even partially broken off, and that the artist replaced it in his own fashion. As Schlegel neglected to give a specific name to his fish, Günther gave it a place in the Catalogue under the title of *Anthias Schlegelii*; and I therefore think that without doubt the true name and synonymy of our fish should stand thus:—

CAPRODON SCHLEGELI.

Caprodon, *Temm. & Schleg., Faun. Jap., Poiss.*, p. 64, pl. 30, 1850, ♂.

Caprodon, *Richards, Ichth., China*, p. 235.

Anthias schlegelii, *Gunth., Cat., Vol. I.*, p. 93, 1859, ♂.

Anthias longimanus, *Gunth., Cat., Vol. I.*, p. 94, 1859, ♀.

Neoanthias guentheri, *Casteln., Proc. Lin. Soc., N. S. W., Vol. III.*, p. 367, 1878, ♂.

Gunther remarks the likeness between his *A. schlegelii* and Richardson's *Serranus rasor*, but the want of lingual teeth in the latter, and also in the *Anthias richardsoni*, forms a marked difference between the two species. Through the kindness of Mr. Macleay I have been enabled of late to examine a specimen of *A. richardsoni*, obtained in this neighbourhood on April 28th, and measuring a little under nine inches, and the first too recorded from our shores. I have also examined some spirit specimens in our own Museum from Tasmania, and am convinced that *rasor* will prove to bear the same relationship to *richardsoni* as *guentheri* does to *longimanus*; in which case the correct name would be *Caprodon rasor*.